

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES**

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**March 4, 1996**

**City of Bethel  
Public Safety Commission  
Regular Meeting of  
[Amended as per direction at the April 4, 1996 meeting]**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM, at the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska, By Chairman Vanasse.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Richardson, Chairman Gary Vanasse, Bruce Day, Shari Neth & Don Constantine,

Absent: John Hastie, Tom Hildreth [Both excused]

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

motion made by Mr. Day and 2nd by Ms Neth, to amend the minutes of the February 5, 1996, regular Commission meeting.

In part VI where Ms. Neth is speaking about Gary Peltola's status, add "official rather than" in front of advisory capacity.

In part VII rephrase the statements into questions. "Is it unacceptable to be drunk in public?" and "Should the City hire two police officers?"

Motion made by Mr. Day and 2nd by Ms. Neth, to approve the minutes of the February 5, 1996, regular Commission meeting as amended by voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

motion Motion made by Mr. Day, 2nd by Ms. Neth to approve the amended agenda to include Item B: under Old Business, Ridgcrest project update. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**V. CHIEF'S REPORTS**

Chief Young had nothing further to add to his reports.

Chief Liu stated that he had asked his staff about how the morale in the Department is now. It was reported to him that it is good. The Department has been getting positive feed back lately.

Ms. Neth asked Chief Liu where the Grant money comes from. He stated the Federal Gov. to the State to us.

**VI. COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS**

Chairman Vanasse read a letter on behalf of Mr. Hildreth who was on an excused absence from the meeting.

Chairman Vanasse also stated that Mr. Hastie was on an excused absence, because of work related duties.

Mr. Constantine requested to be excused from the next meeting. He complemented the police department for the favorable feed back he has heard.

Ms. Neth stated she felt it would be wise to refrain from accepting complaints for specific issues until we get down the complaint procedures.

Chairman Vanasse commended the Fire Department for their quick response in getting a fire out in Tundra Ridge. He also informed the Commission members if they are going to be absent he will read any comments they may want to give to him.

**VII. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD**

There were no People to be heard.

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

**ITEM A: Alcohol Delivery Site**

Ms. Neth gave a report on information she had gathered. She said there were no communities in Alaska that have a alcohol delivery site. She informed the Commission that it is legale to collect a "sales tax" that the licensee collects at the "point of sale." Compliance in Kotzbue of the licensee is voluntary and has not been 100%. Collection is limited to orders mailed or called into the licensee and not those picked up in person. The City of Kotzbue collects approximately \$30,000.00 per year in this manner. The Kotzbue City Attorney has already done the leg work and is willing to help.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**ITEM A: Two New Police Officer Positions.**

Chief Liu commented that this had come about from the Public Forum on alcohol issue Meeting held last November. The auditors also recommended at least 1 full time investigator position. There is an increased workload and the total responses is increasing steadily.

Chairman Vanasse asked about funding for the new proposed positions.

Chief Liu stated that a grant and forfeiture fund would each fund 1/2 a position. He stated that apprehending drug dealers and bootleggers is a costly process.

**Motion**

A motion was made by Mr. Day and 2nd by Ms. Neth, to table this item until the audit and budget reports could be looked at.

Voice vote; passed by all present.

**ITEM B: Stance against public inebriation**

Chairman Vanasse stated that this issue had also come about out of that same meeting as the two police officer position issue.

Ms. Neth stated she felt that the Commission should make a statement supporting the concept.

Mayor Richardson brought up that this is an educational issue.

It was suggested that names of P.C.'s and the P.C. Statistics be printed in the paper.

Chairman Vanasse stated he would like to see a resolution written, passed and mailed to the villages.

**Motion** A motion was made by Mayor Richardson and 2nd by Mr. Day to table this issue until a resolution has been written.

Voice vote, passed by all present.

**ITEM C: Public Safety Department's Concept**

**Motion** There was a short discussion and Mayor Richardson made a motion to table this item based on the City Managers research and recommendation that it not be done. 2nd by Ms. Neth

Voice vote, Passed by all present.

**ITEM D: Supervisor for Police Chief**

Mayor Richardson stated that the City Council was changing the ordinance so that the Police Chief will come under the City Manager. So no recommendation is needed.

**ITEM E: Police Study Recommendations**

Mayor Richardson read a cover letter to the police study recommendations. (See Attached)

Mr. Constantine asked why the Commission couldn't see the entire audit.

Mayor Richardson stated that it had some very sensitive information that couldn't be made public.

Chief Liu stated that the Commission could help in developing a 3 to 5 yr strategic plan to incorporate the audit report recommendations. He suggested that they prioritized the budget items first to discuss at the next meeting.

Mayor Richardson asked Chief Liu to bring a quarterly up date report to the Commission

**ITEM F: Citizen Complaint Process**

Chairman Vanasse passed around, for the Commission to review, two complaint forms, one Mr. Hildreth submitted and one from the audit report.

There was a discussion about the complaint routing process and how to deal with specific names and incidents.

Mayor Richardson suggested to use the process that is already in place becoming involved when the complaint is referred to the Commission.

There was a discussion about what to do when angry people show up at the meetings. Suggestions were to refer them to an executive session if needed to reduce City liability. Hear them out because many times people just want to be heard. After the people have been heard offer direction for their specific complaint.

**ITEM G: Reserve Program**

Chief Liu explained that to go with the audit report recommendation would mean sending every reserve applicant to the police academy. It was discussed that this is an unrealistic and costly expectation for the City of Bethel. Chief Liu stated he had put the program on hold until a decision is made as to what to do with the program.

There was a lengthy discussion about the reserves carrying weapons and the city's liability. The Commission members present agreed that they didn't want the program cancelled but that there were individual issues to be addressed.

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**Motion** Motion made by Mr. Constantine and 2nd by Mr. Day to recommend to City Council to have the City Manager to instruct the Police Chief to reinstate the reserve program.

Voice vote; passed by all present.

**ITEM H: City's New Insurance Rating**

Chief Young read over a report and explained each section. He explained how the ratings that the fire department got reduced the amount of fire insurance premiums people would have to pay to their insurance companies.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** Motion made Mr. Constantine, 2nd by Mayor Richardson to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 pm. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 1996.**

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**Chairman Gary Vanasse**